

THE DASS INSIDER

A NEWSLETTER FOR SMU FACULTY

INFORMATION ON DISABILITY SERVICES AND ACCESS ISSUES AFFECTING YOUR STUDENTS AND CLASSES



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Extended Time and why is it so important?

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For people with disabilities, the greatest gift they receive is often the gift of time- time to get across the street, time to type instead of hand-write, time to filter out distractions and think clearly. In an academic setting, the accommodation of extended time is, by far, the most commonly received request and the most commonly approved. Why is this so important? It is important that each student has the opportunity to have full access to their education, including tests, in order to demonstrate their knowledge. When providing extended time does not alter the fundamental nature of what you are trying to measure, then it is likely appropriate and reasonable. If you are measuring how quickly a person can type, then it is not an appropriate accommodation. If you are measuring whether a person can write about the precursors to the Vietnam War, or solve an algebra problem, then time is somewhat arbitrary, and therefore, it can be appropriate to give a person with a disability a reasonable amount of time to show what they know. Why is this fair? Those non-disabled students HAVE access already, and the accommodation is only providing that same access to disabled students. It does not provide test answers, a modification to what they are tested over, or an advantage to someone who has demonstrated a substantial impairment.

Extended time is often approved for those with reading fluency issues, manual dexterity problems (think arthritis, paralysis, or a broken arm), low vision, or distractibility due to ADHD. Extended time might also be appropriate for students dealing with various other conditions such as significant side effects from medication or medical treatment, anxiety, depression, or a more severe mental illness.

Regardless of what they are facing, students must not only document the condition that impacts their ability to test in the standard time frame, but also make clear why extended time would be critical in order to show what they know. The DASS team reviews each request carefully and does require medical documentation to support the request for extended time. Most students who receive this accommodation receive time-and-a-half of what others are allowed. In rare cases, such as individuals whose multiple conditions collectively impact them more severely, double-time is approved. In general, unlimited time is neither appropriate nor helpful.

Extended time is an accommodation provided in K-12, undergraduate and graduate programs (medical/law/business schools), and standardized tests, including the SAT, ACT, GMAT, LSAT, GRE, MCAT, and medical and legal licensing exams. Again, only when time is the critical factor being measured would this accommodation be deemed inappropriate.

DASS Staff Updates: Welcome Karen Turbeville

DASS is pleased to welcome to our team Karen Turbeville as our new Accommodations Coordinator. Karen holds a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Business Management from East Carolina University and a Master's Degree in Education Leadership from Concordia University. She worked as a Special Education Teacher for over 10 years working with students with learning differences, autism, emotional disabilities, and medical disabilities. She has volunteered with Special Olympics as well as with vocational rehabilitation programs in both Texas and South Carolina.

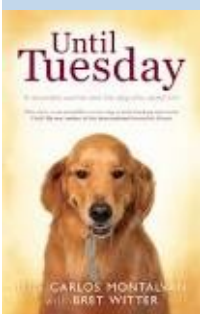
Most recently, Karen was the Learning and Academic Support Specialist at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. At Furman, she supported students with and without disabilities.

Karen will be with DASS full-time, working mostly with students with physical and medical conditions, as well as psychiatric conditions. She is here as a resource to faculty and hopes you will introduce yourself if you make your way over to the LEC.



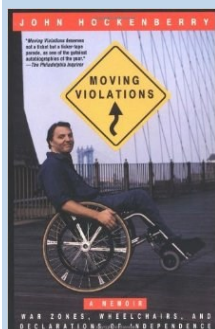
Want to learn more about veterans and disabilities? Check

these out:



Until Tuesday: A Wounded Warrior and the Golden Retriever Who Saved Him

Fmr. Capt. Luis Carlos Montalván, with Bret Witter



Moving Violations: A Memoir War Zones, Wheelchairs, and Declarations of Independence

John Hockenberry

Test Proctoring at DASS: A Partnership with Faculty

If you have students who take your tests in the DASS office, please read the following information:

* DASS serves as a backup to faculty, but should not be the first stop when considering how you will accommodate your students.

* Faculty members working within their departments to test students with accommodations helps DASS to provide small-group, distraction-reduced testing here, for those who truly need it.

* DASS bases extended time on how much time others in the class are given so please share the standard testing time with your class.

*If students fail to follow our procedures for testing, we will direct them back to their instructors to work out the necessary accommodations. Just because DASS has denied a student to test at DASS because they missed the deadline does NOT mean the faculty member should necessarily deny the accommodation for the upcoming test. If it is reasonable for you to put the accommodations

in place, then you should do so.

*DASS takes seriously the need to replicate the testing environment in your classroom. Providing a complete Proctor Form with your tests helps us to do so.

*Remember, every time a student tests at DASS, it is an added cost to the University so please consider options within your own department whenever possible.

Please remember DASS is **not able to proctor exams that are administered on a computer**, unless the student has the accommodation that requires a

word processor for a writing intensive test.



DASS Room 217—test proctoring area

For more information on exams at DASS, please visit :
<http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS/DisabilityAccommodations/TestProctoring>

Did You Know?

Students for New Learning (SNL) is a student organization comprised of student leaders on the SMU campus, all of whom have learning disabilities and/or ADHD. The group is supervised by the DASS office, and meets there each month for a dinner and discussion time. Often, guest speakers from the community as well as SMU faculty are invited to share insights with the students that have proven helpful as they manage life on campus and in the classroom.

SNL sponsors the annual Extra Mile Award, given during the Awards Extravaganza in April, to honor faculty members who work well with students with learning differences. Since inception, The Extra Mile Award has recognized 19 faculty members with this award.

SNL welcomes faculty speakers for their monthly meetings. If you would like to participate or recommend one of your DASS students for SNL, please contact Alexa Taylor for more information.

Faculty Focus: Practical Strategies for helping students with disabilities

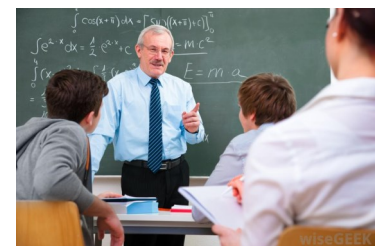
All professors will teach students with learning disabilities. You may hear them describe their challenges with reading or writing when you review the accommodation letters with each of them. Here are some ways to help them, before and after the first day of class.

Some students greatly benefit from audio books, so submit your textbook list as early as possible to the bookstore. If there is an option to order your selected texts in audio version, make note. Even if that isn't an option, students can scan the textbook and use Kurzweil Reader to "listen" to it. They can do the same with .pdf documents.

Note taking is a challenge for many students with LD's, so the more organized you are, the better. Uploading basic outlines, or even your entire power point slides onto Blackboard can help students. Otherwise, plan to assist those with note taking accommodations by identifying a volunteer note taker in the room. Also, allow students to audio record lecture to ensure they leave with the same information as everyone else. If you are resistant to this idea, talk this through with a DASS staff member.

List multiple sources in your syllabus for students to access content. For example, if there is a workbook, website, or CD for students to utilize for practice tests, make these easy to find.

When your student delivers his/her letter of accommodation during your office hours, ask the questions "how do you learn best" and "how can I help you access all the information in my course". You will learn a lot with these open-ended questions.



Student Profile:

Tech Guerrero is a graduating senior who has taken full advantage of the support SMU offers to students with disabilities. He shares his experience by saying “If I have gotten this far as a non-traditional, hard-working, life-learner and a minority individual, I live determined to not allow ADHD to limit my potential in academic or professional work. Besides appreciation for life, the key is the attitude one applies to meeting or exceeding goals.”

He utilizes accommodations and works closely with his instructors to ensure access to his education. He also attended a career summit in Fort Worth last semester, referred by his DASS coordinator. This event, the Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities (COSD), is a non-profit organization offering a chance for students and recent college graduates a chance to connect with employers who appreciate diversity and are invested in integrating these valuable potential employees into their workforce. The summit also walked students through the challenging process of disclosing their disability to an employer, how to represent themselves well through the interview process, and how to find employers who truly respect individuals with disabilities. Tech, along with four other SMU undergraduate and graduate students and SMU alumni, attended the day-and-a-half summit for free, and connected with employers like AT&T, Texas Instruments, and MGM Entertainment.

Here’s what Tech had to say afterwards. “This career fair is one of the best events I have attended, so motivating, pragmatic, connecting, and fun. What a great way to get to know the companies that truly understand diversity and invest resources in events like this. What a fortune it was that it happened in North Texas this time. Thanks for the DASS student newsletter and the motivation to attend, your efforts can make a big impact in students’ lives.”

Tech expects to graduate this December with majors in Anthropology and Technology and Consumer Culture, and minors in Sociology and Creative Computation. He also received the following honors: Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, SMU Community College Merit Scholar, SMU Robert Stewart Hyer Society, and Tau Sigma National Honor Society. He hopes to work in the consumer insights/marketing research industry and then return to graduate school to further his education. DASS staff is very proud of Tech and his positive attitude and we expect to see great things from this Mustang!

Tech is one of many DASS students who successfully balance the demands of academic work, leadership positions on campus and service to our community while managing the impacts of disabilities. DASS celebrates the accomplishments of these students and congratulates Tech on his successful SMU journey!

DASS is more than accommodations.

For resources that may be helpful to faculty and staff, please visit:

<http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS/Resources/ForFaculty>

Faculty Do's and Don'ts for ADA Accommodations

Do

Don't

<p>Do meet with any student requesting accommodations during your office hours or a private appointment. This is when you establish what will be provided in your classroom and how it will be provided.</p>	<p>Don't allow a student to hand you an accommodation letter just prior to the beginning or at the end of class. This should be done individually so the implementation of accommodations is clear to both of you. Remind the student that discussing it in front of others violates their right to keep their disability confidential.</p>
<p>Do follow all the accommodations requested by the student and listed on their accommodation letter.</p>	<p>Don't provide anything other than the items listed on the accommodation letter. Refer them to DASS.</p>
<p>Do expect a student with a disability to follow the same attendance requirements you expect of your class, unless their accommodations include consideration for flexible attendance. Even with this accommodation, be sure to establish expectations in advance of what that accommodation means in your class.</p>	<p>Don't allow a student with a disability to bring you documentation stating that their disability allows them to miss class. Documentation of this nature needs to be submitted to DASS only for privacy concerns.</p>
<p>Do allow a student with a disability to discuss with you problems they may be having in your classroom to help promote their academic progress.</p>	<p>Don't allow them to do less work or alter due dates for projects unless agreed upon in advance. Don't create a different testing format (i.e., essay instead of M/C) for tests given to students with disabilities because they take the test at a different time than the class.</p>
<p>Do discuss how the supplemental notes accommodation will be implemented in your class. If peer notes are not readily available, make plans to pursue another form of notes access quickly so students with this accommodation do not experience diminished access to course material.</p>	<p>Don't announce the student's name or indicate they are the recipient of supplemental notes in any way, unless you are given permission by the student. You should assume students wish to remain anonymous in the delivery of supplemental notes until advised otherwise.</p>
<p>Do expect a student registered with DASS to follow the same Student Code of Conduct as all other students. If a student indicates issues with class behavior when delivering their accommodation letter, take time to discuss this need in detail and set parameters in advance. For instance, students who need to pace or move at some point in class can be assigned seating to make this easier and less obvious to other classmates.</p>	<p>Don't allow a student registered with DASS to act out of turn in class simply because they have presented you with an accommodation letter. Meet with the student to discuss acceptable classroom behavior and options for helping the student meet this standard.</p>
<p>Do allow students to deliver accommodation letters throughout the semester, and work to put those accommodations in place as soon as possible. Feel free to contact DASS to verify the status of a student who reports they are finalizing the process with our office, but need accommodations on pending tests, prior to letter delivery.</p>	<p>Don't set arbitrary deadlines on when students with disabilities must deliver their accommodation letters. This violates discrimination policies, and does not consider the ongoing nature of DASS review of eligibility requests.</p>

VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.SMU.EDU/ALEC/DASS.ASP

Please include this statement in your syllabus:

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Students may call 214-768-1470 or visit www.smu.edu/alec/dass to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements.

VISIT US AT DASS

5800 Ownby Drive—Suite 202 Loyd Center
 2nd Floor - Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center
 Entrance near Gate 3 of Ford Stadium
 Phone: 214-768-1470
 Email: dass@smu.edu



DASS IS MORE THAN ACCOMMODATIONS.